

TASTES OF OUR TOWN

PIZZERIA PRIMA STRADA

by: Paula Smith

"Pizza as theatre." Those are the exact words that owner Geoffrey Dallas had spoken to Chris and I as soon as we sat down at Pizzeria Prima Strada, nestled in the heart of Cook Street Village.

With a large white marble bar that extends around the pizza preparation area, patrons are treated to a performance of sorts as the cooks manipulate fresh dough, spread fresh toppings around the pizza, stretch out the dough and carefully maneuver it all into the wood-burning oven.

The décor of the restaurant is warm with fantastic lighting fixtures that are meant to be seen in person. The pizza-preparation area takes up about a third of the room, with cozy banquettes lining the wall and a sprinkling of booths by the window and along the far wall.

The menu is not large, nor does it need to be. The starters that Chris and I chose were the Insalata Speciale and the Melanzana & Tona, each for \$7. The first came with a plate full of fresh greens covered with a light vinaigrette, ripe cherry tomatoes and mozzarella cheese that was so light, it made a cheese-lover out of me instantly (this has not always been the case!)

The second starter was delicious and had a very unique presentation. On the plate sat a good portion of freshly baked focaccia bread with a small mason jar beside it that contained a tuna and eggplant caponatina in it, it was truly delectable!

For our main courses, we ordered two different pizzas. The first was the Funghi (\$13) that came with a porcini cream sauce, roasted mushrooms, sautéed onions and mozzarella. This was a treat! The pizza crusts are very light and are not greasy at all. That combined with the ingredients made it the highlight of the evening for me.

The second pizza that we ordered was the classic Margherita (\$12). This pizza has a crushed tomato sauce that was so good you want to go swimming in it! (Well, that's what I said, but Chris did give me a weird look afterwards.) It was topped with fresh basil leaves and finished with fiore di latte mozzarella.

The problem with all of the food, if you could call it that, is that everything was so light and fresh, you could (and we did) fool yourselves into thinking that you can eat a lot more of it in one sitting!

This place is sure to become one of the hotspots in the village where pubs and coffee shops already abound, but a great spot to take the entire family and have fantastic food, until now, was in short order.

Pizzeria Prima Strada is located at 105-230 Cook st. and is open everyday with take-out available.